

The macOS Environment

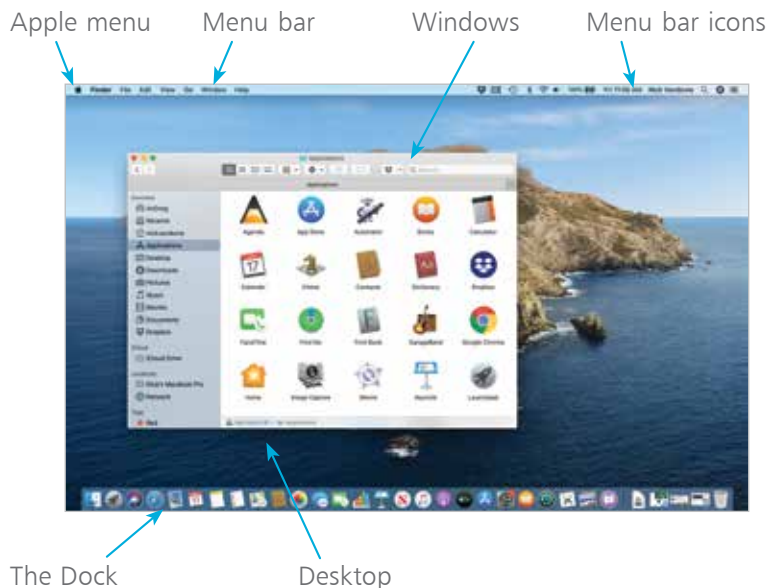
The first most noticeable element about macOS is its elegant user interface. This has been designed to create a user-friendly graphic overlay to the UNIX operating system at the heart of macOS, and it is a combination of rich colors and sharp, original graphics. The main elements that make up the initial macOS environment are:



The Dock is designed to help make organizing and opening items as quick and easy as possible.



Many of the behind-the-scenes features of macOS Catalina are aimed at saving power on your Mac. These include timer-coalescing technologies for saving processing and battery power; features for saving energy when apps are not being used; power-saving features in Safari for ignoring additional content provided by web page plug-ins; and memory compression to make your Mac quicker and more responsive.

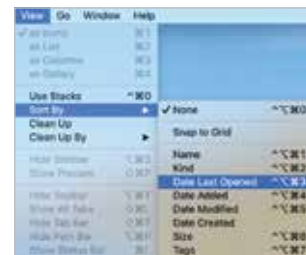


The **Apple menu** is standardized throughout macOS, regardless of the app in use.



Menus

Menus in macOS contain commands for the operating system and any relevant apps. If there is an arrow next to a command it means there are subsequent options for the item. Some menus also incorporate the same transparency as the sidebar so that the background shows through.

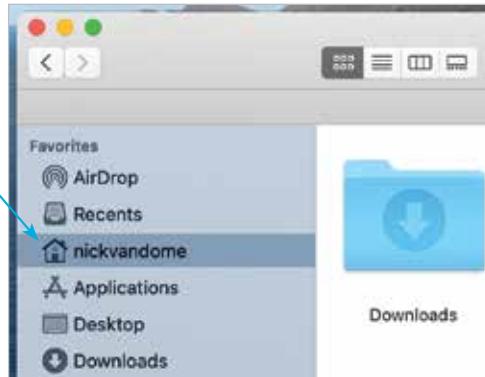


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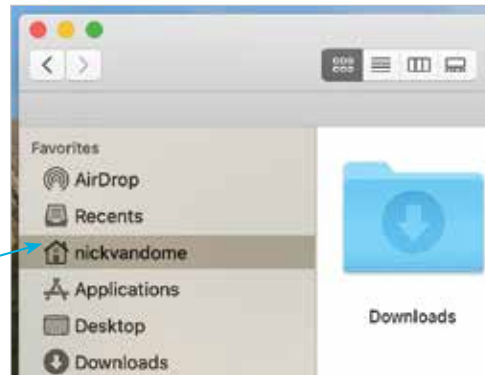
Transparency

One feature in macOS Catalina is that the sidebar and toolbars in certain apps are transparent so that you can see some of the Desktop behind it. This also helps the uppermost window blend in with the background:

- 1 In certain apps with a sidebar, such as the Finder or Safari, the background appears behind the sidebar



- 2 When you move the window, the background behind the sidebar changes accordingly

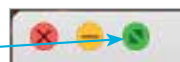


Window buttons

These appear in any open macOS window and can be used to manipulate the window. They include a full-screen option. Use the window buttons to, from left to right: close a window, minimize a window or maximize a window.



If an app has full-screen functionality, this green button is available:



If an option is gray, it means it is not available; i.e. the screen cannot be maximized.

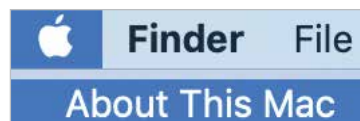


The red window button is used to close a window, and in some cases – such as Notes, Reminders and Calendar – it also closes the app. The amber button is used to minimize a window, so that it appears at the right-hand side of the Dock.

About Your Mac

When you buy a new Mac, you will almost certainly check the technical specifications before you make a purchase. Once you have your Mac, there will be times when you will want to view these specifications again, such as the version of macOS in use, the amount of memory and the amount of storage. This can be done through the About This Mac option, which can be accessed from the Apple menu. To do this:

- 1 Click on the **Apple menu** and click on the **About This Mac** link



- 2 Click on the **Overview** tab



- 3 This window contains information about the version of macOS being

used; the processor; amount of memory; type of graphics card; and serial number

- 4 Click on the **System Report...** button to view full details about the hardware and software on your Mac

System Report...



The System Report section is also where you can check whether your Mac is compatible with the Handoff functionality, which does not work with most pre-2012 Macs. Click on the **Bluetooth** section in the **System Report** to see if Handoff is supported.



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Click on the **Software Update...** button to see available software updates for your Mac

Software Update...

Display information

This gives information about your Mac's display:

1

Click on the **Displays** tab

Displays

2

This window contains information about your Mac's display, including the type, size, resolution, and graphics card



3

Click on the **Displays Preferences...**

Displays Preferences...

button to view options for changing the display's resolution, brightness and color






Click on the **Manage...** button in the Storage window to view how much space specific apps are taking up, and also options for optimizing storage on your Mac. With macOS Catalina, this is known as **Optimized Storage**.

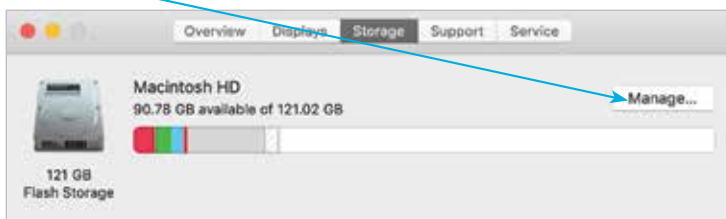
Optimized Storage includes a **Store in iCloud** option, which can be used to enable your Mac to identify files that have not been opened or used in a long time, and then automatically store them in iCloud (if you have enough storage space there). Their location remains the same on your Mac, but they are physically kept in iCloud, thus freeing up more space on your Mac. Optimized Storage also has options for removing movies and TV shows that have been watched, emptying the Trash automatically and reducing overall clutter on your Mac.

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Storage information


This contains information about your Mac's physical and removable storage:

- 1 Click on the **Storage** tab 
- 2 This window contains information about the used and available storage on your hard disk, and also options for writing various types of CDs and DVDs (if applicable)



Managing memory

This contains information about your Mac's memory, which is used to run macOS and also the applications on your computer:

- 1 Click on the **Manage...** tab 
- 2 This window contains information about how memory can be managed in macOS Catalina (see tip)



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Support

The **Support** tab provides links to a range of help options for your Mac and macOS.

Support



Service

The **Service** tab provides links to service and repair options and also the AppleCare Protection Plan, for extending the initial one-year warranty of your Mac.

Service

